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An Act To Provide Free Admission to State Parks to Veterans and Military Personnel

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, this legislation needs to take effect before the expiration of the 90-day period in order to be in effect for the upcoming summer season; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §1819-A, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 268, §1, is amended to read:

§ 1819-A. Day use passes for certain veterans

Notwithstanding section 1819, the commissioner shall enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management for the issuance of a free day use pass to state parks and historic sites to each veteran determined by the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to meet the criteria established in Title 37-B, section 6. The pass entitles the holder, and the holder's spouse and children when accompanied by the holder, to admission free of charge to all state parks and historic sites for the period described in Title 37-B, section 6. This section is repealed June 30, 2010~~2015~~.

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §1819-B is enacted to read:

§ 1819-B. Day use passes for active military personnel

Notwithstanding section 1819, the commissioner shall enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management for the issuance of a free day use pass to state parks and historic sites to each active duty military member determined by the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to meet the criteria established in Title 37-B, section 7. The pass entitles the holder, and the holder's spouse and children when accompanied by the holder, to admission free of charge to all state parks and historic sites.

Sec. 3. 37-B MRSA §6, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 268, §3, is amended to read:

§ 6. Issuance of free day use pass

The Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, in accordance with a memorandum of agreement entered into with the Commissioner of Conservation and this section, shall issue a free day use pass to state parks and historic sites to eligible veterans. ~~The commissioner, in~~

~~accordance with a memorandum of agreement entered into with the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and this section, shall issue a free fishing license and free hunting license to eligible veterans who meet other criteria of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for the issuance of licenses.~~

1. Eligibility. The Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management shall determine, based on an examination of an individual's discharge certificate from active duty services, also known as the DD214, whether the following criteria are met:

- A. The person is a resident of this State;
- B. The person received an honorable discharge or general discharge under honorable conditions; and
- C. Between October 1, 2001 and January 1, ~~2010~~2015, while a member of the Maine National Guard or an active or reserve member of the uniformed services as defined in 10 United States Code, Section 101(a)(5), the person served for a minimum of 3 continuous months outside the United States either:
 - (1) On an operational mission for which members of the reserve were ordered to active duty; or
 - (2) During a period of war declared by the United States Congress or a period of national emergency declared by the President of the United States or Congress.

2. Duration of passes. A ~~license or~~ pass issued in accordance with this section is valid for a minimum of 12 months from the date of an eligible veteran's discharge from active duty. ~~The memorandum~~memorandum of agreement between the departments may allow issuance of passes ~~or licenses~~ for a period longer than 12 months.

3. Responsibilities of commissioner. The Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management shall identify a point of contact within the department to issue ~~licenses and~~ passes in accordance with this section and the ~~memorandum~~memorandum of agreement entered into with the Department of Conservation ~~and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife~~. The commissioner shall periodically report to the Department of Conservation with a listing of the names and addresses of all persons receiving passes to state parks and historic sites and the expiration dates for those passes. ~~The department shall periodically report to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife with a listing of the names and addresses of all persons receiving fishing licenses and hunting licenses and the expiration dates for those licenses.~~

4. Repeal. This section is repealed June 30, ~~2010~~2015.

Sec. 4. 37-B MRSA §7 is enacted to read:

§ 7. Issuance of free day use pass

The Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, in accordance with a memorandum of agreement entered into with the Commissioner of Conservation and this section, shall issue a free day use pass to state parks and historic sites to eligible active duty military personnel.

1. Eligibility. The Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management shall determine, based on an examination of an individual's military identification, whether the following criteria are met:

A. The person's home of residence is this State; and

B. The person is serving in an enlisted grade in the armed forces as defined in 10 United States Code, Section 101(a)(4).

2. Duration of passes. A pass issued in accordance with this section is valid for 12 months from the date of issuance and may be renewed upon verification of continuing eligibility.

3. Responsibilities of commissioner. The Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management shall identify a point of contact within the department to issue passes in accordance with this section and the memorandum of agreement entered into with the Department of Conservation. The commissioner shall periodically report to the Department of Conservation with a listing of the names and addresses of all persons receiving passes to state parks and historic sites and the expiration dates for those passes.

Sec. 5. Effective date. That section of this Act that amends the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 37-B, section 6 takes effect June 30, 2010.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved, except as otherwise indicated.

Effective May 28, 2009, unless otherwise indicated.